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Rec Mgmt - 3-3-3 Supplies + Equipment

Chief, Supply Division/OL

30 JUN 1961

Chief, Records Management Staff/DD

Procurement of Versi-Trays

1. Conventional wooden and metal desk trays stocked by the Federal Supply Service are designed for one purpose only, and that is to hold papers on a desk. This they do well enough in single "IN", "OUT", or "MISC" trays or in stacks. However, they lack flexibility, versatility, mobility, and durability.

a. Wooden trays, when stacked properly, require the stacking supports to be nailed to the sides and ends of the tray. Stacked metal trays are not easily assembled and disassembled.

b. When accidentally dropped or knocked off the desk, both the wooden and metal trays are quite vulnerable to injury. Glued ends of the wooden trays may be loosened or broken while metal trays are fairly easily bent.

c. Secretarial use of wooden trays to carry hot coffee results in unsightly stains and white marks on the trays.

d. Long ago, it was conclusively proved that the horizontal overnight storage of classified papers in single wooden or metal trays in safe drawers wasted a great amount of safe space with a corresponding need for more safes and floor space. It was for this reason that Records Management Staff first developed the portable, metal, box-type, desk tray which permitted vertical storage of classified papers in safes overnight and daytime use of the separate halves of the box as conventional desk trays. Although these portable desk trays were quite successful and saved sorely needed safe space, they did have a few deficiencies such as: (1) rubber bumper strips on top and bottom occasionally came unglued and were lost. When coupled with careless handling, this often resulted in the sharp and unprotected metal edges gouging and scarring desk tops; (2) excessive weight, when filled to capacity, made boxes difficult to handle and sometimes caused

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latching mechanisms to fail. When this happened, boxes would fly open, spilling their contents on the floor. Often one or both halves of the box would also be dropped. Such a drop might well be so severe as to bend the box so badly that it would be quite difficult to get it bent back into shape so as to close properly and have the locking mechanism still hold.

2. Recognizing the need for better desk trays, an initial effort was made in 1958 to improve them.

25X1 a. At first, [redacted] (then in RMS) worked with [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted] of TSS on a modification of the metal box.

25X1 b. Later, [redacted] also RMS, continued this work
25X1 with [redacted] TSS, [redacted] C/OPS/PD/CL 25X1
and Art Haas of Acme Visible Records Co. (suppliers of the present metal box).

c. Early in 1959, the Mosler Safe Company, Diebold, Inc., Acme Visible Records, McGregor & Werner, Inc., and Gichners were all furnished preliminary drawings and invited to work on this project.

d. Later on, Rubbermaid, Inc., and Winn, Stockett and Fisk were also contacted for assistance.

e. While suggested trays were ultimately obtained from Acme Visible Records, Inc., and Rubbermaid, Inc., both were completely unsuitable. Neither company displayed any great interest in redesigning them to meet our needs for a light, simple, versatile, mobile tray.

25X1 f. When [redacted] left RMS for the Internal Revenue
25X1 Service, [redacted] RMS/RMS, took over the project and continued a close liaison with [redacted] Because of 25X1
difficulties in getting any results from the various concerned potential suppliers, it became necessary in November 1960 to place an interim order for the old metal boxes with Acme Visible Records to meet urgent demands of both Headquarters and OO, 25X1 [redacted]

g. In January 1961, the D. H. Owens Co. was asked to check their sources of supply to determine the feasibility of making trays out of plastic or hard rubber. This company did some preliminary work with a plastics manufacturer in Cumberland, Md. Although apparently interested, this manufacturer failed to produce anything of value. Later, the Owens Co., found another supplier in Pa., who ultimately produced an initial set of drawings which were unsatisfactory from the standpoint of stacking and latching features. They have since failed to produce anything else.

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b. In March 1961, [redacted] went to Caldwell, N. J., to discuss the project with Schaur and Appell Plastics Design Engineers in an effort to obtain engineering design services, drawings and a prototype tray. Schaurr and Appell later submitted a proposal to do this preliminary work for a fee of $2500.00. This was rejected as too expensive. 25X1

i. Late in March 1961, [redacted] of my staff took over this project from [redacted] when he resigned from the Agency. Since that time, he and [redacted] have been working quite closely with Mr. H. F. Martin, President of Marfast, Inc., 2121 K St., N. W., and a plastics design engineer in his employee, Mr. Andrew Pelak, to develop a multi-purpose desk tray to replace existing wooden and metal desk trays, including the portable, overnight storage, box-type tray. These efforts have born fruit and a satisfactory prototype, the Versi-Tray, was developed and delivered a few weeks ago. All initial research and development work, design services, model making, etc., were performed by Marfast, Inc., without cost to the Agency. Since working with Marfast, Inc., the Agency has been to little expense other than for the personnel time spent in design and modification of two prior prototypes. 25X1 25X1 25X1

3. The primary value of Versi-Trays are their versatility. Their crisp, clean, modern design complements our new modular office furniture and the new building. They are also equally at home on conventional desks, metal tables, and even on executive-type office furniture. To be made of Polypropylene which is now being widely used to make luggage for Sears, Roebuck and Company (see attachment), chairs for department stores, and related items where strength and beauty must be combined, they are light, yet strong; they are unbreakable. They are not easily scratched or marred. They will not stain or peel. Neither will they scratch or mar office furniture, whether wooden, rubber or formica topped.

a. By the addition of two ingenious Versi-legs (compared to four metal stacking supports for wooden trays and four metal posts for metal trays) Versi-trays can be converted in a few seconds from single trays to stacked trays. They can be stacked two, three, even four or more high. Knocking them back down into single trays can be accomplished just as fast.

b. Versi-Trays are identical, designed with an ingenious pressure locking mechanism which features male and female couplings at each end of the tray and no moving parts. Two Versi-Trays can be snapped together in less than a second to form a Versi-Box which can then be used for the vertical overnight storage of classified papers in safes and vaults; then used as conventional desk trays during the day. The locking

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mechanism holds firm when the box is being handled, yet only a gentle downward and outward pressure of the hands is needed to snap the trays apart. The boxes have been designed to fit into all four types of safes common to the Agency. Six of the Versi-Boxes will fit vertically into a drawer of the insulated Remington-Rand and the non-insulated Mosler safes, compared to one or two conventional wooden or metal trays. Because both the insulated and the non-insulated Herring-Hall-Marvin safes are only 15 and 2/16" and 15 and 4/16" wide, it is necessary to file the Versi-Boxes lengthwise in the drawers, rather than crosswise. Despite this limitation it is still possible to file four Versi-Boxes vertically per safe drawer. Safe space saved in requirements for overnight storage can well be used to store current records. This will be of even greater importance when the move into the new building takes place.

c. Versi-Boxes are light and easily carried, weighing less than a pound. This makes their use a natural for carrying papers to "in-building" conferences. Just snap two trays together and save time transferring papers to an envelope or a brief case.

Not Applicable for overseas use →

d. Versi-Boxes are "made" for shelf-file installations in vaulted areas. They store easily and conveniently on the shelves and can readily be identified as to contents or ownership by use of an inexpensive, pressure-sensitive file-folder label stuck on the end of the box. Identification, when stored in safes, can be provided by sticking the label on the side of the box, which will become the top when the box is stored vertically. Such labels can also be used to identify trays as "IN", "OUT", or "HOLD". Such labels are readily removable and will not mar the box.

e. Secretarial use of Versi-Trays for carrying hot coffee will not hurt the trays. Spilled coffee can easily be removed with a damp cloth, paper towel or tissue.

f. The attached brochure shows graphically the many uses of the Versi-Trays and the Versi-Box.

4. The Versi-Tray prototype has been shown to perhaps a hundred persons ranging from Secretaries and Typists to Executives in all components of the Agency. The enthusiastic response which greeted these demonstrations of the capabilities and versatility of this new product was unanimous. In addition, it has been shown to officials of the Budget Bureau, National Security Council, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, State

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Department, Department of the Air Force, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Veterans Administration, Department of Agriculture, Navy, and others. Their response was also most favorable. In fact, the Budget Bureau has indicated a desire to procure 50 complete Versi-Boxes (including the Versi-Legs for stacking) as soon as they are available.

5. Accordingly, based on joint estimates developed by [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted] it is recommended that 13,000 Versi-Trays and 5000 sets of Versi-Legs be ordered on a priority basis from the developer of the prototype (Martast, Inc., 2121 K St., N.W. FE 3-4411) in lieu of replenishing practically non-existent stocks of the box-type, portable metal desk trays, Stock #7/7520-005-6132. It is further recommended that Versi-Trays be used in lieu of legal size metal desk trays, gray, Stock #7/7520-232-6317 (formerly 7/7520-286/5796), legal size wooden desk tray, walnut, Stock #7/7520-232-6323, and any other similar wooden or metal desk trays stocked by the Federal Supply Service and used by this Agency.

6. Estimated costs, not yet firm, may be obtained from [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted] as may drawings, specifications, and a prototype. These are all still being developed cooperatively by him and [redacted] 25X1 with Messrs Martin and Polak of Martast, Inc. Costs are not expected to exceed $8.75 per tray ($7.30 per box, complete with a set of Versi-Legs). This compares most favorably with a cost of $9.45 for the last order of the portable metal box-type tray.

7. Development of an open-end contract with quantity breaks to run for at least one year is urged. The greatest expense in manufacturing these trays is the cost of the injection mold. The more trays made, the lower the unit cost will become as the mold cost can be amortized over a broader base. Thus, such a contract would enable this Agency to obtain a price advantage on the initial order and any reorders. It would also permit other interested Government agencies such as the Budget Bureau to do likewise and would further simplify procurement paperwork requirements for these agencies by avoiding the necessity of writing separate contracts.

8. Inasmuch as some Agency personnel will be moving into the New Building shortly after Labor Day, it is recommended that any contract written with the supplier of Versi-Trays include a provision calling for delivery to the [redacted] 25X1 of an initial supply of 5000 Versi-Trays and a like number of Versi-Legs as soon as possible after the molds have been made and manufactured samples tested and approved.

[redacted] 25X1

25X1 C/RAS/DDS/FMB/[redacted] Tms (19 Jun [redacted] bution: Orig & 2 -addressee
BPS; 1 - O/S;
PD/OL; 1 - RMS;
1 - FMB 25X1

Enclosures:
As specified

No security objection except as indicated in margin of para 3d

25X1 21 June 61 [redacted] 25X1

[redacted]

Building Planning Staff

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21 June 1961 CONFIDENTIAL 20 JUN 1961
Date Date

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ORIGINAL DOCUMENT MISSING PAGE(S):

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